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SUBJECT: JANUARY 24 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: DARFUR, OLYMPICS,  
DALAI LAMA, IRAN, NORTH KOREA

¶1. Key points at the regular January 24 MFA press briefing:

-- China is playing a constructive role in Darfur and any attempt to link the Olympics and Darfur "goes against the Olympic spirit."

-- The Dalai Lama is not a religious or spiritual leader but someone who seeks to undermine Chinese unity.

-- All sides in the Iranian nuclear dispute should be "creative" in seeking a diplomatic breakthrough.

-- China and Vietnam are committed to resolving their disagreements over the South China Sea through negotiation.

-- China has improved its military transparency through increased military-to-military exchanges and the publication of defense white papers.

-- The Six-Party Talks are moving forward and all parties in the Talks should fulfill their obligations. China is following through on its commitments to provide material aid to North Korea.

-- The MFA spokesperson said she was unaware of reports that North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il will transit through China on his way to visit Vietnam.

Darfur and the Olympics

¶2. At the routine MFA press briefing January 24, MFA Spokesperson Jiang Yu said China is playing a "positive and constructive role" in Darfur and is promoting both a political resolution and the deployment of the Africa Union-United Nations hybrid peacekeeping force. China was the first country to promise troops to the peacekeeping effort, and 140 Chinese engineering troops are already in Sudan. Additional Chinese troops will be deployed soon. Any attempt to politicize the Olympics by linking the Games to Darfur "goes against the Olympic spirit." Asked whether China protested a recent attack on UN vehicles by the Sudanese military, Jiang merely said that there will be "problems and difficulties" given the "unprecedented scope" of the Darfur peacekeeping mission.

Dalai Lama Undermining China's Unity

¶3. In response to a question on the Dalai Lama's asking his followers to protest peacefully during the

Olympics, Jiang asserted that the Dalai Lama is a "political exile" whose real aim is to undermine China's relations with other nations and harm China's unity. The Dalai Lama is not a religious or spiritual leader and the international community should not support his activities.

#### Iran: P5-plus-1 Agreement on New UNSC Resolution

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¶4. China urges all sides in the Iran nuclear dispute to be "creative" and make a "breakthrough" in diplomatic talks. Jiang noted that the P5-plus-1 members had agreed on the text of a new UN Security Council resolution that will urge continued diplomacy and encourage Iran to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency. China hopes all sides can step up diplomatic efforts in order to reach a comprehensive settlement.

#### China-Vietnam Talks on South China Sea

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¶5. Commenting on the January 23 meeting in Beijing of the Steering Committee on China-Vietnam Bilateral Relations, Jiang said China and Vietnam have agreed to "properly handle" disputes related to the South China Sea. The talks were led by State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan and Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Pham Gia Khiem. China's position that the South China Sea islands are part of Chinese territory remains unchanged, she added, but China and Vietnam are committed to resolving the issue through negotiations.

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#### Military Transparency

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¶6. A journalist asked Jiang to comment on recent statements by PACOM Commander Admiral Keating and Deputy Secretary Negroponte that China should increase its military transparency. China's military policy is defensive in nature, Jiang said, and aimed at preserving China's sovereignty and territorial integrity. China has strengthened military-to-military exchanges with other countries and has issued defense white papers in an effort to increase transparency.

#### Hong Kong Port Visits

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¶7. Asked if China's "top leaders" decide whether U.S. military ships can visit Hong Kong, Jiang said China retains authority to approve all such port calls in accordance with the principle of sovereignty.

#### North Korea: Six-Party Talks

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¶8. Jiang pointed to the disablement of North Korea's nuclear facility at Yongbyon as a sign that the six parties are making progress. All parties should move forward under the principle of "action for action." China is proceeding with the delivery of heavy fuel oil and urges other parties to fulfill their obligations quickly so that second-phase actions can be completed as soon as possible.

#### Reported Kim Jong-Il Visit to Vietnam via China

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¶9. Jiang said she was unaware of reports that North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il will transit through China on

his way to visit Vietnam. Jiang added that the Communist Party of China and the Korean Workers Party enjoy good relations.

Taiwan

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¶10. In response to a series of questions about Taiwan, Jiang repeated standard language that Taiwan is an "inalienable part of China." Taiwan is the "core" issue in U.S.-China bilateral relations. China urges the United States to safeguard bilateral relations by adhering to the one-China policy and the Three Communiques.

South Korean Asylum for FLG Practitioners

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¶11. Jiang said she was unaware of reports that a South Korean court had recently granted political refugee status to two followers of the Falun Gong (FLG) movement. China has banned the FLG according to law and thus "there is no persecution to speak of." China hopes other countries will not believe the "lies" of the FLG and grant refugee status to FLG practitioners.  
RANDT